

Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board MINUTES

January 17, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bernie Kneeland, Chairperson; Tom Eicholtz, Vice-Chairman, Jim Hodges, and new members: Jerry Ostrowski and Don DeGraves

R&P STAFF PRESENT: Patrick Dugan, WSGC General Manager

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board (WSGCAB) was called to order at 6:05 p.m. at the Riverview Restaurant at Wicomico Shores Golf Course by the Board Chair, Bernie Kneeland

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Board Chairman introduced two new members of the WSGCAB. Mr. Jerry Ostrowski, who is replacing Dave Phelan and Mr. Don DeGraves who is the new Parks and Recreation representative on the Board replacing Greg Weaver who retired. The Board spent a brief time overviewing the purpose of the Board as an advisory to the County Commissioner's and cited an example of correspondence prepared in the past.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the October 18, 2023 meeting were approved by email prior to the October meeting.

GOLF COURSE/RESTAURANT UPDATES

Patrick Dugan provided copies of the following documents/ information to the board

- Year to Date Rounds of Golf, Revenue and Expense Comparison FY21 to FY24
- WSGC Revenue Comparison FY24 and FY23
- WSGC Expense Comparison FY24 and FY23
- Annual Comparison FY17-FY24

In summary of the above documents, Patrick reported that overall golf operations and restaurant were doing well. Green and cart fees in first half of FY24 exceeded the green and cart fees in first half of FY23. Restaurant revenue also exceeded the first half FY23 revenue. Bottom line is that revenue for the first half of FY24 exceeds expenses for a positive net of \$168,607. The Chairman questioned the decrease in season pass revenues for the first half of FY24 compared to the same time frame in FY23. Patrick reported that season pass numbers have decreased some but the primary driver was the change in policy in FY23 that required purchase of a full season pass to avoid a surcharge. This resulted in most season pass holders paying the full season pass fee which covered 1 April 23 through 31 March 24 upfront in the April/ May 2023 timeframe. The revenue was reported in the fourth quarter of FY23. Patrick reported that he was very pleased with the restaurant performance in the first half of FY24. The restaurant has effectively dealt with challenges in supply costs which persisted in FY23. Patrick also commented that he was pleased with the performance of the ground crew.

- Status of Capital Improvement/ Equipment Purchases
 - FY24 budget included funding via ECC for capital equipment (mowers, Gator, tractor)
 - FY24 included a plan to purchase 1 greens mower, 1 Gator vehicle, 2 Zero turn mowers, 1 tractor. The money was not released until early September so the purchase orders were prepared/ approved and released later than originally anticipated.
 - Purchase orders for the two (2) zero turn mowers have been approved
 - Purchase order for the Gator was approved and the Gator has been delivered to the course.
 - Purchase order for the greens mower was approved. Patrick reported that the greens mower may be delayed until September 2024. If that is the case, the grounds crew will have to use the existing greens mower which may require some additional funding to maintain.

- Purchase order for the tractor was approved. However, Patrick reported that the tractor would not be ready until September 2024. The delay in receiving the tractor is holding up planned efforts to complete some of the maintenance efforts planned in FY24 (e.g. tee box improvement and moving dirt to holes #7, 13, 15.) The Board suggested that Pat investigate renting a suitable tractor to support the planned efforts. Patrick said that he would investigate the possibility of renting a tractor.
 - Pat reported the course did obtain a ball picker for the driving range.
- Patrick provided an overview of the findings reported in an Agronomy Survey report that was provided. The Agronomy Survey was conducted by a USGA field representative. Both Patrick and the lead Grounds keeper, Jim accompanied the USGA representative during the survey. The report identified several areas and recommendations to consider to improve the overall maintenance and condition and the golf course. Patrick and Jim are working to address some of the recommendations to continue to improve the condition of the golf course.

OLD BUSINESS

- Annual Pass Service Fee
 - Patrick reported that he is still trying to implement a pay by the month system. He is continuing to meet with the County finance personnel to develop and implement the plan. He would like to have the plan implemented prior to the new fee period which begins on 1 April 2024.
- Golf Cart Replacement Plan
 - Patrick reported that Club Car Carts were now targeted for delivery on 12 February 2024.
 - Patrick reported that if that date holds, he may be challenged with coordinating the return of the Yamaha carts in this same timeframe.
- Fishing on Golf Course
 - Signs have been posted on #11 and #17 Stating “No Fishing”. Patrick reported that one of the signs had been torn down.
- Update on County efforts on “Green Initiatives”
 - No “Green Efforts have been identified yet.

New Business

- New officers were elected to serve through the calendar 2024 year. Jim Hodges moved that the two current officers remain for the current year. Both Bernie Kneeland and Tom Eicholtz agreed to continue in the Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions for calendar 2024.
- The Annual Report for 2023 was distributed prior to the meeting. The Chairman asked if any of the Board members present had any changes or additions to the draft report. Both members of the Board from last year approved the report as written.
- A brief discussion of the FY25 Budget identified that Patrick’s submittal included:
 - A request for 400 additional man hours for cart management (checking out carts, cleaning, and refilling gas, etc.) and Course Marshall support.
 - A placeholder for \$150K for CIP efforts in FY25, and
 - Funds for the acquisition of six (6) pieces of additional equipment
 - Funds for one full time employee to support grounds maintenance efforts.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 6:00 pm at the Wicomico Shores Golf Course Clubhouse.

ADJOURNMENT

- Jerry Ostrowski made a motion to adjourn and Jim Hodges 2nd the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:05 P.M.

Bernie Kneeland

Minutes approved by the WSGC Advisory Board on